Saint Paul Planning Commission City Hall Conference Center 15 Kellogg Boulevard West

Minutes February 5, 2010

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, February 5, 2010 at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Mmes

Present:

Mmes. Donnelly-Cohen, Faricy, Morton, Porter, Smitten, Thao, Wencl; and Messrs. Alton, Commers, Goodlow, Gordon, Johnson, Kramer, Margulies, Nelson, Spaulding, Ward, and Wickiser. In addition, new commissioners

Connolly, Fernandez, Gelgelu, Halverson, Merrigan and Young, who were sworn

in during the meeting, were present.

Commissioners

Absent:

Mr. *Schertler

*Excused

Also Present: Donna Drummond, Planning Director; Dennis Rosemark, City Councilmember

Harris' Office; Patricia James, Penelope Simison, Merritt Clapp-Smith, Luis Pereira, Joe Musolf, Kate Reilly, Josh Williams, Anton Jerve, Sarah Zorn, Emily

Goodman, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic

Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes January 22, 2010.

MOTION: Commissioner Faricy moved approval of the minutes of January 22, 2010. Commissioner Wencl seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Donnelly-Cohen had no announcements.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Donna Drummond announced that the orientation for the new commissioners will occur after the regular Planning Commission meeting today, and she invited any current commissioner who would like to attend to stay. Ms. Drummond said the orientation will include basic Planning Commission procedures, the organization of PED, the current work program and an overview of zoning.

Ms. Drummond also distributed a memo regarding zoning procedures from Peter Warner, Assistant City Attorney, who was not able to attend today's orientation session. Mr. Warner had suggested that it be passed out to all the commission members as a refresher and for their information.

IV. Zoning Committee

SITE PLAN REVIEW – List of current applications. (*Tom Beach*, 651/266-9086)

None.

OLD BUSINESS

#09-424-870 Greg Brendemuehl – Re-establishment of nonconforming use as a 4-plex. 267 Front Avenue, between Matilda and Galtier. (*Sarah Zorn*, 651/266-6570)

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the re-establishment of legal nonconforming use as a triplex subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

#09-423-979 Walgreens (Ford Parkway) – Site plan review for a new Walgreen's Drug Store and second commercial building. 2101 Ford Parkway. (*Tom Beach*, 651/266-9086)

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the site plan subject to additional conditions.

Commissioner Nelson questioned the turning radius and the access points for the loading itself. Tom Beach, DSI staff, said that the applicant submitted a plan showing the truck maneuvering. The larger truck that comes once a week for the main delivery would come in off Ford Parkway, back up to the dock, and go the out the driveway to Finn and then back to Ford Parkway.

Commissioner Nelson asked if that would interfere with customer access to parking spaces. Mr. Beach said that it would interfere with circulation through the parking lot. For that reason the deliveries will normally come either early in the morning or after the store closes at night.

Upon questions by Commissioners Ward and Faricy, Mr. Beach explained that the number of curb cuts was being reduced and that there would be no left turn movements from Ford Parkway onto the site.

Commissioner Gordon said that there are three problems with this project: the design standards under Section 63.110; perpetuating an auto oriented use in a pedestrian oriented district; and the mixed issue. He referred to the City Council's resolution on November 12, 2009, which reversed the Planning Commission approval of the previous site plan. He then compared the resolution's specific findings to deny the site plan with the staff report recommending approval of the new site plan. Lines 189 through 194 of the City Council resolution state that the site plan approved by the Planning Commission does not meet the general design standards under the legislative code section 63.110. The staff report finding I.2 sets forth the design standards and the hold the corner issue. Also in the City Council resolution lines 196 through 204 gives an additional reason for denial in that allowing a design that perpetuates an auto oriented design in a pedestrian oriented district will make it that much more difficult to facilitate pedestrian oriented design standards on adjacent properties in the future.

Commissioner Gordon also pointed out that in lines 21 through 22 of the resolution, the City Council noted that the District 15 Highland Park neighborhood plan calls for "incorporating a mix

of uses and a pedestrian friendly environment in commercial areas". He stated that the Planning Commission is bound by the City Council decision, which means unless this revised site plan addresses and resolves the issues raised by the City Council we do not have the authority to approve it. He concluded that the revised site plan does not resolve the issues given by the City Council for not approving the previous site plan and stated that until it comes into compliance with the requirements of the city code, he is voting against the motion to approve the site plan.

Commissioner Margulies stated his opposition to the site plan. The decision boils down to two or three things. The City Council told the applicant that they wanted to see them hold the corner. Instead of holding the corner for the building that was the subject of the application, they propose an out building on the corner. This is contrary to the intent of the city regulation about holding the corner. The Planning Commission would be making a mistake to approve this because it would be precedent setting. This is not the precedent Commissioner Margulies wants use as a model for future applicants. By denying this we are not saying there can not be a Walgreens here. By working together we can make this a better project.

If this is approved and goes to the City Council they will say so this is what the Planning Commission is deeming acceptable and this is what applicants can do going forward. That is not the precedent Commissioner Margulies wants to tell future applicants to look at. This is why he is voting against this site plan.

Commissioner Ward noted that there were already other developments in pedestrian-oriented commercial areas of the City where development did not hold the corner. He stated that the traffic issues in this area would be improved if this site plan is approved, and that the neighbors are in support of this plan.

Commissioner Porter is in agreement with Commissioners Margulies and Gordon; she believes they would be setting a precedent, so she is voting against this site plan. She also believes the key word is future development. With that she called for a vote.

Chair Donnelly-Cohen called for a roll call vote.

<u>ROLL CALL VOTE</u>: The motion to approve the site plan failed on a roll call vote of 12-6 (Alton, Donnelly-Cohen, Goodlow, Kramer, Morton, Ward).

Commissioner Gordon moved to deny the site plan because the site plan failed to comply with the design standards in Sec. 63.110, including holding the corner, the development would be an auto-oriented use in a pedestrian-oriented area, and that the traffic study completed for the project was inadequate. Commissioner Margulies seconded the motion.

Chair Donnelly-Cohen called for a roll call vote, and reminded Commissioners voting in favor of the motion to state their reasons, which could be the reasons provided by the maker of the motion.

<u>ROLL CALL VOTE</u>: The motion to deny the site plan carried on a roll call vote of 12-6 (Alton, Donnelly-Cohen, Goodlow, Kramer, Morton, Ward).

NEW BUSINESS

#10-005-258 Tou Yang – Re-establishment of nonconforming use as a duplex. 1224 Kennard Street, between Orange and Maryland. (*Sarah Zorn*, 651/266-6570)

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the re- establishment of legal nonconforming use status. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

#10-005-510 Jinsil Hwang – Re-establishment of nonconforming use as a duplex. 1204 Pacific Street, SW corner at Griffith. (*Sarah Zorn*, 651/266-6570)

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the re- establishment of legal nonconforming use status. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

#09-425-394 Kringle Nelson Holdings – Change of nonconforming use from mixed residential/commercial (1 commercial unit and 4 residential units) to 5 residential units. 1041 Osceola Avenue, NW corner at Oxford. (Sarah Zorn, 651/266-6570)

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the change of nonconforming use status subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

#10-004-695 Charles Brost – Change of nonconforming use to add outdoor auto sales to existing nonconforming auto repair business. 1200 7th Street West, NE corner at Tuscarora. (*Emily Goodman*, 651/266-6551)

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the change of nonconforming use status subject to additional conditions.

Commissioner Wickiser stated that if this application is approved; all of the additional conditions for the auto repair and car sales uses must be met.

Commissioner Kramer explained his opposition to this application was due to the circumstances by which the nonconforming use is being established. After the previous nonconforming use of auto repair expired, the Planning Commission approved re-establishing the same auto repair use; however that use was never re-established. An auto repair license has been issued, but no auto repair ever took place on the site. A previous City Council decision on a petition to rezone the lot from B2 to B3 a number of years ago for an auto sales use on the lot was denied. For the meeting today, staff has provided additional information on the rezoning denial. The City Council denied the auto sales use, and a court upheld that decision. Approving this application would be using the nonconforming use process to achieve a backdoor rezoning. Therefore he is not supporting the Zoning Committee's motion.

At the request of Commissioner Morton, Chair Donnelly-Cohen called for a roll call vote.

<u>ROLL CALL VOTE</u>: The motion to approve the nonconforming use failed on a roll call vote of 10-8 (Alton, Commers, Faricy, Goodlow, Gordon, Johnson, Margulies, Morton).

Commissioner Kramer moved to deny the nonconforming use based on findings that the proposed

use is not equally appropriate or more appropriate to the neighborhood than the auto repair use because there is no established or existing non-conforming use on this lot; the traffic generated by the auto sales use would be greater than that generated by auto repair; the lot area is significantly undersized for auto sales, so the proposed use may be detrimental to the existing character of the neighborhood; and the use is inconsistent with the District 9 Plan Summary. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion.

Chair Donnelly-Cohen called for a roll call vote, and reminded Commissioners voting for the motion to state their reasons, which could be the reasons provided by the maker of the motion.

<u>ROLL CALL VOTE</u>: The motion to deny the nonconforming use carried on a roll call vote of 14-3 (Alton, Johnson, Morton).

#10-003-232 New Harmony Assisted Living – Rezoning from R4 One-Family Residential to RM2 Multiple Family Residential. 118 & 130 Rose Avenue East, 123 & 135 Geranium Avenue East. (*Penelope Simison*, 651/266-6554)

Commissioner Nelson said he assumes all lots would be tied into a single parcel. He also asked that, if variances permitting construction of surface parking were denied but the parcel next to the skilled nursing facility was rezoned to RM2, was it the applicant's intention to demolish the single family housing? Penelope Simison, PED staff, said the applicant has not made a decision regarding demolition of the single family house. Patricia James, PED staff, added that if the applicant redesigned the surface parking so that variances were not required, they would be able to demolish the house. She added that her recollection from the committee testimony was that because of the grade change on the property between Rose and Geranium, the surface parking was intended for visitors to the skilled nursing facility.

Commissioner Nelson said he did not think the surface parking could be designed to provide a required setback of 12.5 feet along the western property line. Ms. Simison said the site plan showed all of the required set backs for the surface parking but, during the site plan review process, the setback along the western property line was reduced to accommodate additional landscaping for a buffer adjacent to the single family house in the R4 district.

Commissioner Nelson also asked about the link between the skilled nursing facility and the assisted living facility, and whether variances were needed to allow it to be developed. Ms. Simison stated that, if the commission recommends rezoning to RM2 and the council adopts it, the entire property would be RM2 and variances would not be needed.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

#10-003-240 New Harmony Assisted Living (2) – Conditional use permit for assisted living facility, with variances of number of units permitted and parking lot/driveway location. 118 & 130 Rose Avenue East, 123 & 135 Geranium Avenue East. (*Penelope Simison*, 651/266-6554)

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the conditional use permit subject to additional conditions and deny the variances. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

#10-004-005 Metropolitan Council Env. Pigs Eye Forcemain (2) – Conditional use permit for forcemain (sewer) construction in the river corridor, with variances of a number of river corridor standards. Property lying west of Pigs Eye Lake, east of Mississippi River, south of St. Paul sewage treatment plant. (Josh Williams, 651/266-6659)

Commissioner Smitten wanted to know if staff has heard from our partners, DNR and the National Park Service. Are they part of the review process of the restoration and erosion control measures?

Josh Williams, PED staff, said the applicant did speak with the National Park Service and the DNR. The National Park Service's concern was that the project avoid their land, which it does and the DNR is alright with that.

Commissioner Smitten asked if the DNR or the National Park Service provided written comments to the Metropolitan Council regarding the plan or will they be involved in the review process of the restoration strategy?

Mr. Williams said no. But there have been continued conversations with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service about some eagles that nest on Pigs Eye Island. The initial information was that those nests were more then 1,000 feet away, but there is one that is about 750 feet away. This meets the Fish and Wildlife Services conditions. In terms of the restoration the DNR will not be monitoring it but there will be a third party monitoring it to make sure that it is meeting conditions that are laid out by the resolution and that involves the Department of Safety and Inspections.

Commissioner Smitten suggested that the applicant contact DNR and other partners on the restoration planning. Mr. Williams stated that he thought that the applicant would be amenable to this request.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the conditional use permit subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Kramer announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, February 11, 2010.

V. Comprehensive Planning Committee

<u>Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan</u> – Report on Metropolitan Council review of Plan; draft resolution recommending City Council adoption of the plan. (*Penelope Simison*, 651/266-6554)

Penelope Simison, PED staff, said the Planning Commission reviewed and recommended approval of the individual chapters and the Implementation and Introduction sections of the Comprehensive Plan more than a year ago. After the City Council approved the chapters of the Plan, the Metropolitan Council reviewed the Plan and, on December 9, 2009, approved the City's Plan for consistency with regional planning documents. The changes requested by the Metropolitan Council were technical in nature and not substantive. The resolution before the commission recommends that the City Council adopt the Plan. A chart describing the City's

growth forecasts in terms of sewered and unsewered population, households, and employment, was inadvertently omitted from the document and will be added.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee reviewed the resolution before the Commission and also the sewered and unsewered future growth projections. This was one of the technical nature items that the Metropolitan Council wanted to include in the Water chapter; it was inadvertently omitted. Staff is now requesting this be incorporated into the document. In addition, a new version of Figure T-I, showing truck routes and facilities, is recommended to replace the figure in the document. The two issues for action today are the substitution of the map and the sewered and unsewered calculations into the Water chapter.

Commissioner Commers said that Appendix T-A, in the Transportation chapter, is advisory.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Wencl moved the Comprehensive Planning Committee's recommendation to approve the resolution. Commissioner Morton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

VI. Swearing in of New Commissioners

New Saint Paul Planning Commission members Anthony Fernandez, Bree Halverson, Roxanne Young, Paula Merrigan, Pat Connolly and Gene Gelgelu were sworn in by Shari Moore, City Clerk.

VII. Resolutions of Appreciation for Departing Commissioners

Chair Donnelly-Cohen read resolutions thanking each of the Commissioners.

<u>MOTION:</u> Commissioner Alton moved approval of the resolution honoring Commissioner Morton. Commissioner Spaulding seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

<u>MOTION:</u> Commissioner Wencl moved approval of the resolution honoring Commissioner Faricy. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Ward moved approval of the resolution honoring Commissioner Johnson. Commissioner Thao seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

<u>MOTION:</u> Commissioner Margulies moved approval of the resolution honoring Commissioner Gordon. Commissioner Alton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

<u>MOTION:</u> Commissioner Smitten moved approval of the resolution honoring Commissioner Lu. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

VIII. Neighborhood and Current Planning Committee

<u>Smith Avenue Revitalization Plan & Zoning</u> Study - Approve resolution initiating plan and zoning study. (*Kate Reilly*, 651/266-6618)

Kate Reilly, PED staff, said the Neighborhood Committee has recommended initiating a planning study for the Smith Avenue Corridor from the High Bridge all the way to Dodd Road in West Saint Paul. This is a joint task force between the cities of West St. Paul and Saint Paul that the Planning Commission is being asked to appoint. This is the first time that anyone can recall that the city has done such a joint planning process and Ms. Reilly is very excited to have West St. Paul as a partner. West St. Paul will adopt policy recommendations coming out of the planning process that pertaining to that city, and Saint Paul will adopt policies pertaining to Saint Paul. A question was brought up at the Neighborhood Planning Committee meeting and she wanted to address it. One of the committee members asked her to inquire with a business owner on the West Side if he would be interested in serving on the task force. Ms. Reilly did inquire with the gentleman and he attended the public meetings and was aware of the process, but did not apply. This business owner will be included on the mailing list for future mailings.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Wencl moved the Neighborhood Planning Committee's recommendation to approve the resolution initiating a plan and zoning study. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Wencl announced that the next Neighborhood Planning Committee meeting is on Wednesday, February 10, 2010.

IX. Communications Commission

2009 Planning Commission Annual Report.

Commissioner Smitten announced that at the Commissioners' places is the Saint Paul Planning Commission 2009 Annual Report. She thanked the Communications Committee for spending so much time this year on the details of the annual report; she particularly wanted to thank Anton Jerve and Donna Drummond for their help. It is a good revision from the reports in the past.

Commissioner Margulies commented on the Comprehensive Plan and asked if the Communications Committee had worked on that. He said that it is a beautiful piece of work and very accessible; the brightness of it signifies what we are doing in Saint Paul. He is very proud of staff and how it looks and represents the work of the city. Commissioner Margulies thanked everyone responsible for this.

Commissioner Smitten said that it was all staff who had worked on the formatting and she agreed it looks fantastic. It looks like a lively document to use.

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, wanted to give credit to Christina Morrison and Emily Goodman on the planning staff who have learned InDesign, which is the primary program used to put together documents like this. They worked with other staff who worked on the various chapters, picking out photos and finalizing maps. They really did a nice job of putting it all together. Ms. Drummond expressed her appreciation for the Commissioners' comments.

X. Task Force Reports

Commissioner Smitten announced that the Smith Avenue Revitalization Task Force will be having their first meeting on Tuesday evening, February 9th to start the Smith Avenue planning work.

Commissioner Thao announced that the Western, Hamline, and Victoria Steering Committee was very pleased to hear the news that these three stations are going to be built with the initial LRT construction. They want to thank the Planning Commission for convening the steering committee and look forward to moving ahead.

Commissioner Kramer serves on the 3M Design Advisory Group, but he has not been able to attend the meetings so he asked if someone is interested in serving on that committee to talk to him, Chair Donnelly-Cohen, or Luis Pereira who is the city's staff representative.

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XI.	Old Business	
	None.	
XII.	New Business	
	None.	
XIII.	Adjournment	
	Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.	
Recorded and prepared by Sonja Butler, Planning Commission Secretary Planning and Economic Development Department, City of Saint Paul		
Respectfully submitted,		Approved(Date)
Donna Drummond Planning Director		Marilyn Porter Secretary of the Planning Commission